



July 2002

The City of Fremont *Strategic Plan 2020* has been approved by the City Council. The plan outlines a vision for the long term future, and strategies and goals to achieve the vision. The plan is a product of months of research and discussion between the City Council and the Executive Management Team.

The plan has three main purposes. First, it communicates the City's vision for the future to residents, businesses, and City employees. Second, it provides guidance to policy makers so that decisions made to meet today's challenges are made with a clear vision in mind. Third, the plan provides the framework for long term departmental planning in context with the City's overall plan.

Since the City's incorporation in 1956, planning has been important to Fremont. From the original General Plan in 1969 to annual departmental Strategic Planning, the City has always valued careful planning, goal setting, and achievement. The current General Plan was adopted in 1991 and is going through a phased revision. We are approaching the point where the original vision for land use in the City has been substantially achieved.

Concept plans for Fremont's historic areas and the central business district, development plans for Pacific Commons and Ardenwood, along with the extension of BART will precipitate major changes in this decade. Strategic planning is an opportunity to look further down the road, considering all aspects of community development and service delivery. The *Strategic Plan 2020* attempts to weave these important initiatives together into a cohesive, distinctive vision for the future.

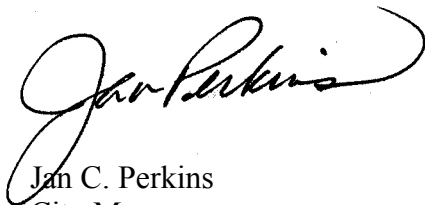
The face of Fremont has changed dramatically over the last decade. The community has been enriched by a new spectrum of cultures, and is seeking new ways to both celebrate its diversity and unify all segments of the community. In only 10 years, Fremont's population has changed from a predominantly white community to a minority-majority community, meaning that no single ethnicity comprises a majority of the population.

Strategic planning helps paint a picture of the next Fremont, and to work toward making the picture a reality. The plan bridges the past to the future by acknowledging enduring community values and the important services in place to support them, while focusing on "crossroads" issues: those that present distinctive alternative paths and may shape Fremont's identity for the future. The plan is not intended to directly reflect the City's budget, nor should it serve as budget justification on its own. Rather, it is intended to provide context for discussion of emerging issues and guide departmental resource planning toward achievement of the City Council's vision. The plan may provide guidance for funding decisions at the margin, as new resources beyond existing departmental budgets may become available for strategic initiatives.

Finally, the strategic plan must be a living, flexible document that can adapt as the community evolves. Next steps include:

1. *Communication with employees:* Discussions will be held with all employees, so they understand the vision and direction of the City as expressed in the Strategic Plan and actively participate in implementing the plan.
2. *Discussions with the community:* Meetings will be held with many groups and neighborhoods in the community to share the contents and vision of the Strategic Plan. We will ask for feedback on the direction of the plan and how community members feel they can contribute to its success. These discussions will also serve to forge stronger relationships with diverse sectors of our community.
3. *Departmental business plans:* Each City department will review its own business plans and other Strategic Plans to identify any changes needed to ensure that the direction of the department is consistent with the direction of the City's Strategic Plan.

We will revisit and update the plan periodically, using it to foster discussion of changing conditions and emerging opportunities for the future. I look forward to these discussions, and to using the Strategic Plan to mark progress toward our exciting future!



Jan C. Perkins
City Manager



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1-3
Fremont Today	4-6
Vision for Fremont in 2020	7
Long Term Outcomes and Five-year Goals	8-14
Enduring Community Values and Core Services	15-18
Appendix	20-52
Strategic Issues	20-50
<i>Section Overview</i>	21-23
Population Diversity.....	24-27
Civic Engagement.....	28-29
Regional Leadership and Alliances.....	30
Recreational and Cultural Amenities.....	31-33
Neighborhood Preservation.....	34-35
Preservation of Public Safety.....	36-37
Economic Development.....	38-41
Housing.....	42-43
Transportation.....	44-46
Historic District Commercial Revitalization.....	47-48
Central Business District.....	49-50
Process Overview	51
Building Blocks of Effectiveness	52

Executive Summary

Fremont Today

Fremont is located in southern Alameda County and stretches from the San Francisco Bay to the top of Mission Peak above historic Mission San Jose in the east. With a population of 208,000, Fremont is the fourth largest city in the San Francisco Bay Area and is among the largest 100 cities in the nation. In terms of area, Fremont measures approximately 92 square miles; the sixth largest in California. It includes the 450-acre Central Park and 80-acre Lake Elizabeth along with 47 other parks, 5 community centers and extensive sports facilities.

Strategic Planning Process

The Strategic Plan is the product of months of research and discussion between the City Council and the City's Executive Management Team. The process consisted of six major steps: (1) the City Council launched the process in January 2001; (2) an environmental scan to gather information and ensure common understanding of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges facing the community was conducted; (3) key strategic issues (contained in pages 20 - 50 of the Appendix of this document) identified in the environmental scan were researched to assist with development of vision and goals for the community; (4) the City Council discussed the strategic issues and their vision for the future; (5) a vision statement, long term outcomes that further articulate the City's role in working toward the vision, and proposed goals with a five-year timeframe to achieve the long term outcomes were drafted; (6) in February 2002, the City Council adopted the vision, long term outcomes, and five-year goals as the Strategic Plan for the community.

City Council's Vision

The City Council's vision is for the long-term (20-year) future of the community. It provides a foundation upon which strategies, operational goals, and action will be based.

Fremont, in the year 2020, will be a globally connected economic center with community pride, strong neighborhoods, engaged citizens from all cultures, and a superb quality of life.

Short version:

Fremont: Where America's Main Street meets the global future

Long Term Outcomes

The following long term outcomes further articulate the vision and outline the areas for Citywide focus that will have the highest impact on achieving the vision.

1. Dynamic local economy
2. An engaged and connected multicultural community
3. Thriving neighborhoods
4. Living and working in Fremont
5. Interesting places and things to do
6. Effective transportation systems

Five-year Goals

The Strategic Plan contains five-year goals for each of the long term outcomes. The full list of goals for each outcome is listed on pages 8 - 13 of this document. Highlights include:

1. Dynamic local economy
 - Complete an economic development Strategic Plan and a business marketing plan
 - Design a business conference center at Pacific Commons
 - Capitalize on the global community and business connections existing in Fremont
 - Help businesses improve emergency preparedness and security practices
2. An engaged and connected multicultural community
 - Engage Fremont's diverse cultural groups
 - Increase diversity in the volunteer base, boards, and commissions
 - Increase staff with language and culture skills
 - Create interaction among leaders of various cultural communities
 - Create opportunities for young people from all cultural backgrounds
 - Develop multi-lingual media connections
3. Thriving neighborhoods
 - Grow neighborhood area identities
 - Implement a comprehensive housing preservation strategy
 - Identify capital funding sources for aging public facilities
 - Develop a community identity for Ardenwood
4. Living and working in Fremont
 - Increase the amount of housing considered affordable
 - Promote a variety of housing types
 - Connect local residents to local jobs
 - Establish strong connections among higher education, employers, and the City
5. Interesting places and things to do
 - Construct a prototype block for the Central Business District
 - Complete redevelopment of a major site in each of the historic areas
 - Attract upscale retail and restaurants
 - Construct a water play park facility in Central Park
 - Build community support for a cultural arts facility
 - Acquire and develop parkland

6. Effective transportation systems

- Begin construction on the BART extension to Warm Springs
- Secure a funding plan for the Irvington BART station
- Improve traffic safety and signal coordination
- Ensure an effective bus system
- Create a significantly improved paratransit system
- Complete preliminary design and funding plan for an I-680/I-880 connector
- Complete plans for a transit station at Pacific Commons

Enduring Values and Core Services

The City provides high quality basic services to the community that reflect enduring community values, or the reasons people choose to live and work in Fremont. These core services represent most of the day-to-day work of the City but are not necessarily strategic, as they are fundamental to a City government's very existence. Nevertheless, the City must acknowledge and continue to provide excellent basic services, as they are the foundation upon which strategic initiatives may be launched.

Key community values include:

- Strong community leadership
- A safe community
- A vibrant local economy
- Thoughtful, orderly use of land and protection of environmental resources
- Safe and effective transportation systems
- Public facilities and programs for recreation
- Historic character
- Building a caring community
- Strong families and healthy children
- Involvement of a diverse population

Basic City services that support each value are listed on pages 14 - 18 of this document.

Next Steps

The Strategic Plan is intended to be a living, flexible document that can adapt as the community evolves. It will be updated periodically and used to foster discussion of changing conditions and emerging opportunities for the future. Next steps include communication with employees, discussions with the community, and departmental business planning to ensure that operations are aligned with the vision, long term outcomes, and five-year goals.

Fremont Today

Fremont is located in southern Alameda County and stretches from the San Francisco Bay to the top of Mission Peak above historic Mission San Jose in the east. With a population of over 208,000, Fremont is the fourth largest city in the San Francisco Bay Area and is among the largest 100 cities in the nation. In terms of area, Fremont measures approximately 92 square miles; the sixth largest in California. It includes the 450-acre Central Park and 80-acre Lake Elizabeth along with 47 other parks, five community centers and extensive sports facilities.



The strategic planning process began with an environmental scan which identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that may be important for considering Fremont's future from the perspectives of local economy, neighborhoods and housing, transportation, community involvement, and City government.

Local Economy

Fremont is geographically positioned as a crossroads of Silicon Valley, which is evidenced by its strong, technology-based local economy. The development of industrial areas and employment centers, plans for redevelopment of historic commercial districts, and the availability of other property for development portend a promising economic future. The strength of the economy has not only fostered a community with relatively high incomes and property values, but provides a strong tax base for high-quality City services. The only weakness in the local economy, relative to neighboring cities, is the retail sales sector. However, this weakness is potentially offset by the planned Capitol Avenue/ Downtown development project, in which the attraction of high-end retail and entertainment is a prominent goal.

Neighborhoods and Housing

Fremont's heritage as five independent towns is simultaneously a strength and a challenge. Long-time Fremont residents identify strongly with their neighborhood or historic district. While this identity fosters community and social interaction within the neighborhood, it contributes to the potential that Fremont may not unify as one community with a common identity and broad community interaction.

As the City's neighborhoods and housing stock begin to age and change over time, there is increasing pressure to preserve their quality, historic residential character and prevent deterioration. Thanks to the tremendous Bay Area economy over the last decade, property values have been rapidly increasing, thereby encouraging reinvestment and maintenance. However, as economic growth continues, Fremont is facing a new problem: people who have grown up here not being able to buy homes in Fremont because of high property values.

Fremont has a long-standing history in the Bay Area of providing a diversity of housing types and prices. Until the last ten years, with some exceptions, the market in Fremont responded to this demand with a broad range of housing. During the last decade, the overall imbalance of supply and demand has now priced many people out of the Fremont market. A lack of affordable housing is a significant threat to the socio-economic diversity Fremont has enjoyed in the past.

Transportation and Infrastructure

A major strength for Fremont is its modern transportation network of roads, trails and public transit linking neighborhoods, commercial centers, and amenities. Further, Fremont's location on the BART system, especially with the planned extension to San Jose, is a major opportunity to connect Fremont residents with employers and other attractions in the Bay Area. BART may also play a role in mitigating highway traffic congestion, which otherwise could threaten Fremont's quality of life and continued economic expansion. The solutions to these large-scale problems require regional approaches, and the City continues to participate wherever possible. As the community continues to evolve, the City will face decreased demand for new infrastructure, but increased demand for maintenance and reinvestment in existing infrastructure, housing, and public facilities.

Community Involvement

Fremont's quality of life and technology-oriented economy have drawn a highly educated, ethnically diverse population with a relatively high median-income. This diversity further enriches the community's character and will help sustain economic prosperity. Effective public involvement in civic life, particularly with emerging ethnic communities, is an opportunity that may prove critical for ensuring effective government, solving community problems, and building a connected community. Other forms of diversity, including age and socio-economic, are valued and add to the richness of life in Fremont. The needs of these groups are supported through a strong, coordinated network of non-profit and social service agencies.

City Government

Fremont is prepared for the future with a progressive, high-quality City government, distinguished by an energetic workforce, political stability, and regional collaboration and leadership. Financially, the City is healthy with a diverse revenue base and prudent reserves. Potential threats include vulnerable State revenues, the inevitable private sector business cycle that may be exacerbated by Fremont's place in Silicon Valley, and the State once again taking money from cities to shore up its own finances. Nevertheless, the City values adaptability, and is prepared with contingency options for the City Council's consideration, should the threats materialize. An additional threat is the challenge of recruiting and retaining high-quality employees in the face of the high cost of housing in Fremont. The market for highly qualified City employees moves further from Fremont to seek affordable housing. In response, the City is becoming more aggressive and innovative in employee recruitment and compensation. Regardless of these threats, the City is ready to embrace opportunities and challenges as it embraces the future.

Vision for Fremont in 2020

The City Council's vision is for the long term (20-year) future of the community. It provides a foundation upon which strategies, operational goals, and action will be based.

Vision:

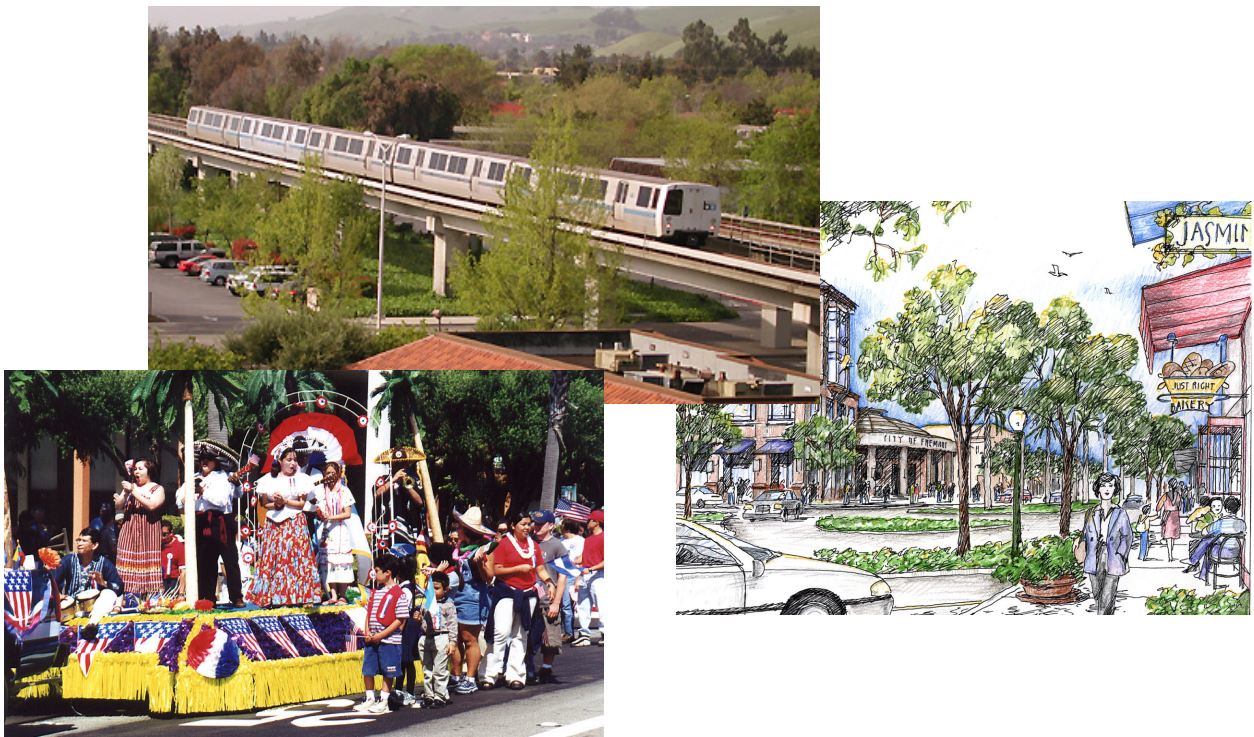
Fremont, in the year 2020, will be a globally connected economic center with community pride, strong neighborhoods, engaged citizens from all cultures, and a superb quality of life.

Short version:

Fremont: Where America's Main Street meets the global future

Organizational Vision:

The people of our organization feel part of a team creating a strong and vital community, continually satisfying customers, and accomplishing this work with pride and enjoyment.



Long Term Outcomes and Five-year Goals

The following long term outcomes further articulate the vision and outline the areas for Citywide focus that will have the highest impact on achieving the vision. The following pages (9-14) discuss each of the long term outcomes and corresponding five-year goals.

1. **Dynamic local economy:** A diverse, strong, and adaptable economy where businesses can be successful in the global economy and where residents and visitors can enjoy high-quality commercial amenities.
2. **An engaged and connected multicultural community:** Strong relationships among people of all cultures and backgrounds to foster democratic community leadership and commitment to a flourishing Fremont.
3. **Thriving neighborhoods:** Safe and distinctive commercial and residential areas where people know each other, are engaged in their community, and take pride in their neighborhoods. Make sure Fremont stays a great place to raise children.
4. **Living and working in Fremont:** A range of housing to match the variety of jobs in Fremont enabling people to live and work locally throughout their lives.
5. **Interesting places and things to do:** Places of interest throughout the community where people want to gather, socialize, recreate, shop, and dine.
6. **Effective transportation systems:** A variety of transportation networks that makes travel easy throughout Fremont.



1. Dynamic local economy

Statement of Outcome:

Ensure that Fremont has a diverse, strong, and adaptable economy where businesses can be successful in the global economy and where residents and visitors can enjoy high-quality commercial amenities.

Rationale:

A dynamic, diverse economy is an important driver for a sustainable community. Strong local revenues are essential to pay for the variety and quality of City services that residents desire. The economy is also the source of employment for residents and can provide the resources they need to enjoy all the benefits of living in the region. Fremont must be able to capitalize on its Silicon Valley location to retain and attract high-quality business and industry. It must also distinguish itself in its ability to anticipate and meet the needs of desirable emerging and existing industries in order to keep the local economy strong over time.

Five-year goals:

- Complete a comprehensive study and Strategic Plan focused on achieving the type of local economy and attracting and retaining the companies desired by the Fremont community.
- Develop a marketing plan that highlights the benefits of doing business in Fremont.
- Be ready to develop a business conference center at Pacific Commons.
- Attract businesses engaged in the global economy that will contribute most to our economic base. Capitalize on the global community and business connections existing in Fremont.
- As current property uses become obsolete, identify new land uses to adjust to a changing economy.
- Create strategies to help businesses increase their emergency preparedness and security practices.



2. An engaged and connected multicultural community

Statement of Outcome:

Build strong relationships among people of all cultures and backgrounds to foster democratic community leadership and commitment to a flourishing Fremont.

Rationale:

The 2000 Census indicated that Fremont no longer has a majority population of any particular ethnic group. Many of Fremont's residents are eager to participate in civic life, but are uncertain how to become involved. To remain customer driven, the City must understand and serve the interests of all residents who reflect a variety of cultural backgrounds and perspectives. Building strong relationships among different cultures, and between City government and other institutions and organizations will help people connect for common purposes and build community leadership for the future.

Five-year goals:

- Engage Fremont's diverse cultural groups in sharing their future visions of Fremont as part of the City's long term Strategic Planning process.
- Increase representation of all cultural groups in Fremont's community volunteer base, City boards, and commissions.
- Enhance City services by increasing the proportion of City staff with language and culture skills reflective of actual community demographics.
- Educate City employees about the many different cultural traditions now reflected in the community.
- Create opportunities for interaction among leaders of various cultural communities so that they may get to know each other and find common interests.
- Create new opportunities for young people from all cultural backgrounds to volunteer in the community and learn leadership skills in order to foster civic responsibility and discover the opportunities in public service.
- Connect with the numerous multi-lingual, culture-specific media available in the Fremont area for communicating with our residents and businesses, and create multi-lingual information on the City's website.
- Sponsor and support events and opportunities that foster connections among all residents from all cultural backgrounds.

3. Thriving neighborhoods

Statement of Outcome:

Build and promote safe and distinctive commercial and residential areas where people know each other, are engaged in their community, and take pride in their neighborhoods.

Rationale:

Healthy neighborhoods are built through strong social connections, the provision of quality safety services, and well-planned and maintained facilities. Neighborhoods thrive when people know their neighbors, have the skills and confidence to solve neighborhood problems, are involved and knowledgeable about civic matters, and partner with public safety departments to create a safe community. The City also has a responsibility to invest in a neighborhood's physical infrastructure, including its streets, sidewalks, neighborhood parks, and community centers. This is particularly important as the community continues to age and approaches physical build-out.

Five-year goals:

- Build, grow and nurture neighborhood area identities.
- Build community and staff capacity to enable a collaborative approach to identifying and solving problems at the block, neighborhood, and citywide levels.
- Organize targeted areas for concentrated City attention in the area of infrastructure maintenance, neighborhood networking and special service needs.
- Implement a multi-faceted housing preservation strategy.
- Identify new capital funding sources for replacing or sustaining aging public facilities (e.g. streets, parks, and community facilities).
- Develop a community identity for Ardenwood and pursue opportunities that may result from future land use and development proposals.



4. Living and working in Fremont

Statement of Outcome:

Provide a range of housing to match the range of jobs in Fremont to enable people to live, work, and continue to reside here throughout their lives.

Rationale:

The high cost of housing has driven many Bay Area workers to live great distances from their jobs. Long commute times through crowded traffic corridors are a major source of dissatisfaction. The ability for people to both live and work in Fremont fosters personal commitment to the community, helps people get to know each other, improves the quality of life by shortening travel time away from home and family, and reduces environmental impacts. Additionally, many people reaching retirement are forced to leave their communities for less costly housing options outside Fremont. Connections between generations are promoted by having people of all ages able to make Fremont their home. A wide range of housing, from apartments to estates, coupled with a matching range of nearby jobs, enables children to grow up in Fremont, to live and work here, and to retire here. It allows Fremont to continue to be a great place to raise children.

Five-year goals:

- Increase the amount of housing considered affordable to enable more people who work in Fremont to live in Fremont.
- Promote a variety of housing types that can meet lifetime needs so that people have the option to live here throughout their lives.
- Create an economic development strategy to attract businesses that can employ the talents and skills of Fremont residents.
- Develop and implement programs and events to connect local residents to local jobs.
- Increase cooperative initiatives with the school district to ensure that Fremont continues to be widely perceived as having an excellent education system.
- Establish strong connections between higher education, employers, and the City so that continuous training is available to prepare people for high-quality jobs within the community.



5. Interesting places and things to do

Statement of Outcome:

Create places of interest throughout the community where people want to gather, socialize, recreate, shop, and dine.

Rationale:

Quality of life is enhanced when people have interesting places to gather, socialize, recreate, shop, and dine. Revitalizing historic commercial areas, creating a unifying downtown, capitalizing on our park and recreation resources, and developing unique destinations will all help Fremont embrace the future as a major regional center of interest while retaining its small-town feel and amenities.

Five-year goals:

- Complete construction of a prototype block in the Focus Area of the Central Business District.
- Complete redevelopment of a major site in each of the three historic commercial project areas to stimulate other private investment.
- Evaluate the local and regional retailing environment, and take steps to attract upscale retail, including restaurants, where people will gather and enjoy activities.
- Complete a conceptual design and a funding plan for a family-oriented water play park and construct the facility in Central Park.
- Develop a conceptual plan and build community support for a cultural arts facility.
- Develop a financing plan for public amenities, using historical trends and public polling information, based on what the public will support through tax measures.
- Acquire and develop parkland in accordance with the master plan.



6. Effective transportation systems

Statement of Outcome:

Create a variety of transportation networks that make it easy to get to, around, and through Fremont.

Rationale:

A convenient transportation network is a key factor in the quality of life and economic vitality of a community. Most important is enabling residents and employees to easily get to and around the community. Another priority is moving traffic efficiently through Fremont to keep commuters from clogging streets used by residents and employees of local businesses. Providing easy access to employment centers may prove to be a competitive advantage in economic development and business recruitment. Residents in Fremont benefit from efficient transportation by saving time and reducing stress in their commutes and may more fully enjoy the benefits of living in Fremont.

Five-year goals:

- Begin construction on the BART extension to Warm Springs with funding secured and right-of-way acquisition completed.
- Secure a funding plan for the Irvington BART station.
- Improve traffic safety and signal coordination.
- Ensure that Fremont has an effective bus system providing service that supports the transit needs of the community and is equal to the City's level of financial investment.
- Create a significantly improved paratransit system that meets the needs of the local community.
- Complete preliminary design and funding plan for an I-680/I-880 connector.
- Complete plans for a transit station at Pacific Commons and be ready to build when the market will support it.
- Improve connections between homes and commercial areas within individual neighborhoods.



Enduring Community Values and Core Services

The City provides high quality basic services to the community that reflect enduring community values, or the reasons people choose to live and work in Fremont. These core services represent most of the day-to-day work of the City but are not necessarily strategic, as they are fundamental to a City government's very existence. Nevertheless, the City must acknowledge and continue to provide excellent basic services, as they are the foundation upon which strategic initiatives may be launched.

1. *Value:* **Strong community leadership**

City Council, Boards, and Commissions work with the community to create the long term vision for Fremont and provide policy direction and guidance to the City organization. The City Manager and staff carry out the long term vision on a daily basis through a variety of services and activities.

Services supporting this value:

- Strategic Planning
- Budget development
- Stewardship of public funds
- Policy direction
- Land use planning
- Regional, State, and national leadership
- Legislative initiative

2. *Value:* **A safe community**

People value a feeling of safety and security within their community. In Fremont, residents work together and with City staff to prevent crime and solve problems in their neighborhoods.

Services supporting this value:

- Community policing and patrol
- Crime prevention education
- Crime investigation
- Neighborhood Crime Watch
- Animal services
- Traffic engineering
- Fire prevention and suppression
- Emergency medical services
- Hazardous materials management
- Community Emergency Response Teams
- Building safety



3. *Value:* **Vibrant local economy**

The local economy is comprised of a strong, diversified commercial and industrial base, providing high-quality employment for the region. It is balanced with a strong retail sector and healthy neighborhood commercial districts

Services supporting this value:

- Business retention and attraction
- Fire Department Business Liaison Program
- Marketing and communications for economic development
- Historic commercial district redevelopment
- Responsive development processing and one stop Development Center
- High Tech Crime Task Force



4. *Value:* **Thoughtful, orderly use of land and protection of environmental resources**

The City values a harmonious blend of natural and physical environments, with particular priority for preservation of open space, such as the hillface and bay wetlands. Thoughtful land use and conservation also protect people's social and financial investments in the community.

Services supporting this value:

- Land use planning
- Development plan review
- Park Maintenance
- Community preservation
- Environmental services

5. *Value:* **Safe and effective transportation systems**

Quality of life is highly dependent on high quality transportation systems, which enable people to get around easily. Alternatives to automobile transportation, such as walking, cycling, and public transit are also valued.

Services supporting this value:

- Street design and engineering
- Paratransit services
- Architecture and structural engineering
- Traffic system and signal engineering
- Street and median maintenance
- Infrastructure construction inspection
- Advocacy for improved public transit and regional infrastructure investment



6. *Value:* **Public facilities and programs for recreation**

Public facilities provide individual and family entertainment, relaxation, and education. Fremont's public amenities include parks, community centers, historic estates, a golf course, and related programming.

Services supporting this value:

- Park planning and maintenance
- Recreation programs
- Multi-service senior centers
- Urban Forestry
- Library maintenance and service enhancement

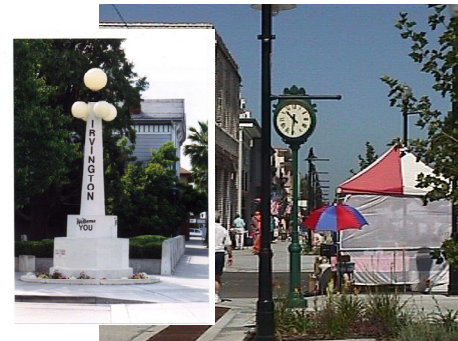


7. *Value:* **Historic character**

Preservation of historic properties, neighborhoods, and commercial districts enables the community to adapt to change and embrace a progressive future while remaining true to its heritage and historic character.

Services supporting this value:

- Community preservation
- Recreation program planning
- Neighborhood commercial redevelopment
- Land use planning



8. *Value:* **Building a caring community**

Fremont is a community where members care for each other and value services that help families and individuals to live self-sufficiently with a respectable quality of life. The community values a range of housing opportunities balanced with employment opportunities to ensure that people who work in Fremont may also live here.

Services supporting this value:

- Homeownership and affordable housing development
- Family Resource Center
- Family counseling and support
- Youth employment assistance
- Community policing
- Multi-cultural programs
- Support and coordination for non-profit social service agencies
- Community engagement programs
- Senior support services and Senior Center
- Intergenerational volunteer programs
- Community Emergency Response Teams



9. *Value:* **Strong families and healthy children**

Fremont is proud of its identity as an excellent place for families and children. The City partners with the school district and other agencies and groups to foster growth in families and provide opportunities for youth development and community involvement.

Services supporting this value:

- Family counseling and support
- Recreational programs
- Teen Center programs
- Family Resource Center programs
- Youth employment assistance



10. *Value:* **Involvement of a diverse population**

Fremont is an inclusive community that welcomes people of all ages, ethnicity, income, and background. The City believes that all segments of the population must be engaged and involved in making community decisions in order to ensure a high quality of life and effective democracy.

Services supporting this value:

- Community engagement programs
- Community policing
- Human services programs
- Volunteer programs
- Economic development programs
- Recreation programs



11. *Value:* **Effective and efficient city government**

The Fremont community wants honest, responsive city government serving the community's interests with progressive, equitable, and fiscally responsible service delivery.

Services supporting this value:

- Executive leadership
- City Attorney services
- Geographic information systems
- Maintenance of City buildings
- Services to City employees
- Financial services to the organization
- Information services for City departments
- City Council support and records management

Appendix

Strategic Issues	21-50
<i>Section Overview</i>	21-23
Population Diversity.....	24-27
Civic Engagement.....	28-29
Regional Leadership and Alliances.....	30
Recreational and Cultural Amenities.....	31-33
Neighborhood Preservation.....	34-35
Preservation of Public Safety.....	36-37
Economic Development.....	38-41
Housing.....	42-43
Transportation.....	44-46
Historic District Commercial Revitalization.....	47-48
Central Business District.....	49-50
 Process Overview	 51
 Building Blocks of Effectiveness	 52

Strategic Issues

Overview

Based upon the work completed during the environmental scan phase of the strategic planning process, eleven strategic issues that may have the most significant potential impact on Fremont were developed. This information was used as a reference for developing the vision, long term outcomes, and five-year goals in the Strategic Plan.

To be considered “strategic” for visioning, issues had to be of the nature that there could be alternative paths the City could choose, or staff is unclear on the City Council’s intent for the issue, and the path selected will impact future decisions.

Strategic Issues:

- ◆ Population Diversity
- ◆ Civic Engagement
- ◆ Recreational and Cultural Amenities
- ◆ Regional Leadership and Alliances
- ◆ Preservation of Public Safety
- ◆ Neighborhood Preservation
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Historic District Commercial Revitalization
- ◆ Central Business District

The issues provided context and background information for the City Council’s visioning work. A challenge for staff was to remain focused on the long term (approximately 20-year) vision for the community without delving into the tactical issues of “how will we get there.” Tactical questions were addressed after the vision was established.

To help with this long-range focus, staff identified questions for each issue that highlight the particular vision-level questions for City Council consideration. What follows is a brief list of the strategic issues and related questions for clarification. Following the list is a more thorough discussion of each of the issues, which served as part of the information relied upon by the City Council in developing the Strategic Plan.

Strategic issue questions

1. Population Diversity

- Should the city expand its investment in diversity by building capacity in cultural organizations, providing funding for cultural activities and building facilities to provide public spaces like performing arts venues to make it easier to share and celebrate cultural diversity?

2. *Civic Engagement*

- What may be appropriate roles for the City in facilitating the involvement of our diverse population in community debate and decision-making?
- Is the City's current approach to community engagement, which strengthens the partnership with neighborhoods and helps groups to identify and address problems while becoming more self-sufficient, appropriate?

3. *Recreational and Cultural Amenities*

- Does the City Council want to take recreation programming to a higher level by investing in significant new facilities (e.g. aquatic parks, cultural/performing arts center, cricket facilities, museums) toward a goal of having regionally renown facilities and programs
- Does the City Council support increased development of commercial entertainment? What are viewed as implications of that decision?

4. *Regional Leadership and Alliances*

- Does the City Council want to expand its regional, state, and national leadership?
- Can the City Council members expand the time they are engaging in regional, state, and federal arenas?

5. *Preservation of Public Safety*

- Should the City pursue additional resources (such as bond issues) to meet public safety facility needs?
- Should the City increase its resource allocation and heighten its focus on disaster preparedness?
- Should the City consider adopting heightened measures to reduce the risk of fire and safety hazards in existing development?

6. *Neighborhood Preservation*

- Shall the City intensify its focus on neighborhood preservation?
- What role should the City play in such an intensification?

7. *Economic Development*

- Should the City increase its emphasis on business attraction in any particular sector (employment centers, high-volume retail, or shopping and dining amenities) with increased marketing or increased subsidies and incentives?

8. *Housing*

- Can the City distinguish itself in the Bay Area as a community where a variety of housing types, pricing and availability is provided?
- Should the City develop new initiatives to ensure that the existing housing supply is preserved?
- The City Council recently adopted a new Housing Element to its General Plan that is being reviewed by the state. Should the City supplement the strategies included in that element in any way to take advantage of the planned investments in Fremont's downtown and in mass transit?

9. *Transportation*

- Historically, the City has built transportation systems to meet the transportation levels demanded by land use in the General Plan. Given emerging transit opportunities, namely BART, should the City consider General Plan land use changes that will support new transportation opportunities?
- Are the implications of BART connecting to San Jose sufficiently important for the City to take an active role in advocating for and developing revenue sources for the completion of this project?

10. *Historic Commercial District Revitalization*

- In order to achieve the vision, are we prepared to accommodate the tradeoffs that arise between economic revitalization, historic character and existing City standards (such as parking standards)?

11. *Central Business District*

- Should City staff proactively pursue implementation of the CBD Concept Plan and the general urban design principles described in it as the framework for future development in the focus area?
- Is mixed-use housing an acceptable path for the CBD and if so, under what circumstances?
- What should be the role of new city hall and a potential cultural arts facility in the establishment of the focus area in the downtown?

Strategic Issue: POPULATION DIVERSITY

Description

The changes in Fremont's population demographics, particularly ethnicity, age, and income, may have implications for City services and our consideration of other strategic issues

Why is the issue strategic?

Understanding the social environment, or who lives and works in Fremont, is the first step toward understanding citizens' expectations for the City and making strategic service decisions. The City currently adapts its basic services to the needs of its diverse population and is sensitive to the communication and cultural issues that affect service delivery. Diverse community organizations now organize an active calendar of cultural activities in banquet facilities and limited presentation facilities like the Smith Center at Ohlone College. The City's ability to work cross-culturally is also critical for continued economic health, as many Fremont companies have strong ties to other countries, particularly the Pacific Rim. To ensure a strong social fabric and a healthy democracy, the City must find ways to involve members of diverse populations in governance, such as voting, participation on boards and commissions, volunteering, or employment with the City.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for future

The City Council views the community's ethnic, economic and age diversity as a strength, and will continue to adapt services and foster a welcoming environment for the diverse groups that now comprise Fremont. The City will continue to support the integration of diverse cultural and socioeconomic groups to build a unified Fremont community. Staff should continue to study demographic trends and their implications for City services.

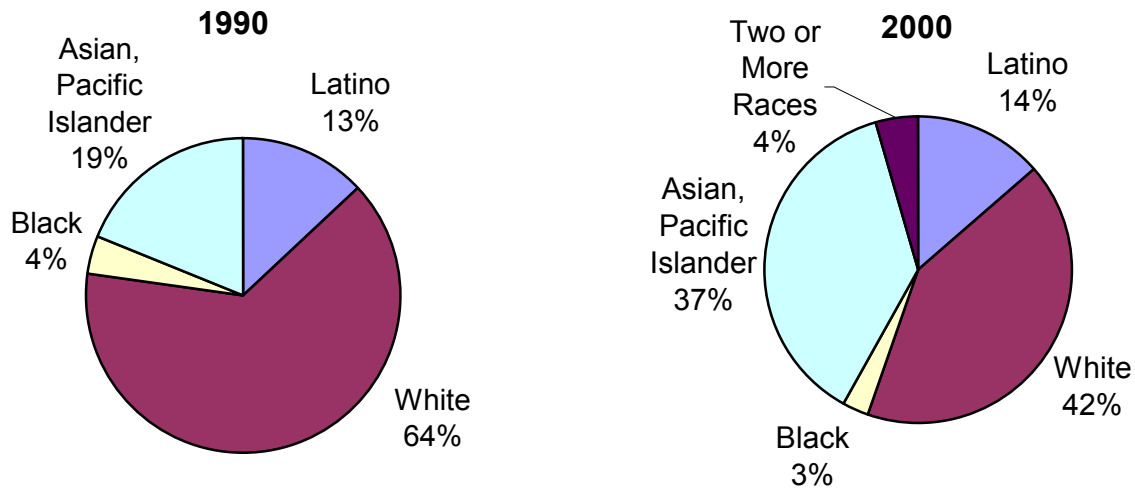
Key question for City Council vision clarification

- Should the city expand its investment in diversity by building capacity in cultural organizations, providing funding for cultural activities and building facilities to provide public spaces (like performing arts venues) to make it easier to share and celebrate diverse cultures?

Background

The 2000 Census confirmed that Fremont is the fourth largest city in the Bay Area, with 203,413 people, an increase of 17% since 1990. The composition of Fremont's population has evolved since incorporation in 1956 from a predominantly white farming community to a middle-class industrial community in the 1970s and 1980s, to the present, in which Fremont has a high-tech economic focus and is home to an array of international ethnicities. Three demographic trends with significant import for the future include ethnicity, age, and income. As the City goal is to provide excellent service to the community, these trends pose fundamental challenges for the City in adapting to changing service needs and may provide context for considering all other strategic issues.

Changing Ethnicity Demographics



Population diversifying

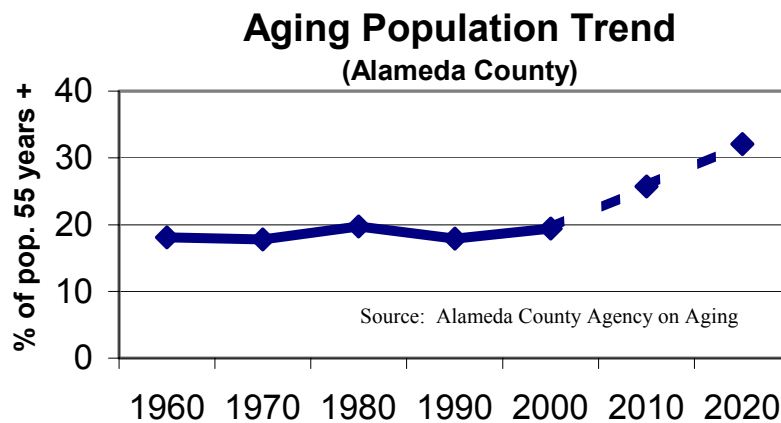
The 2000 Census suggests that ethnicity demographics have changed significantly, even in the most recent decade. In 1990, the population was predominantly white. The Census confirmed that Fremont is now a minority majority community, meaning that no single ethnicity comprises a majority of the population.

The growth in the Asian population and the decrease in the white population represent significant changes in the ethnic makeup of Fremont. In 1990, whites comprised 64% of the population, Asians made up 19%. In 2000, Fremont's white population had decreased to 42%, while the Asian population had grown to 37%. It is important to note that the "Asian" category is comprised of many nationalities, including Chinese (14%), Asian Indian (10%), Filipino (6%), and others (7%) including Afghan, Korean and Vietnamese just to name a few. Fourteen percent of residents reporting Latino ethnicity. Black or African American residents represent 3% of the population, while 4% of Fremont residents reported two or more races.

The emerging ethnic diversity presents challenges for the City. Most importantly for providing excellent service to the entire community, the City must develop the capacity, in language and knowledge of cultural norms, to effectively reach all segments of the community. More fundamentally for the long term, however, the City must find ways to engage and involve the immigrant communities in the democratic systems of the larger community, such as voting, boards and commissions, and employment with the City. Finally, the City's growing diversity could increase the potential for conflict between racial and ethnic groups, so the City will need to work proactively to promote racial tolerance.

Population Aging

Another significant demographic change for the community's future is the projected senior population. As the graph below suggests, since Fremont's incorporation, the percentage of the population represented by seniors has remained relatively constant. Compared with the rest of Alameda County, the southern part of the county has been home to less than 15% of the senior population. Nevertheless, as the Baby Boom generation approaches senior citizenry, the senior share of the Alameda County population is expected to double to approximately one-third of the population, and Fremont can expect to experience a proportional share of the increase.



Implications for the City's role in supporting seniors may be significant. To prepare, the City conducted 24 focus groups in eight languages to identify the interests and perspectives of a growing, culturally diverse, aging population. City staff is currently working on a 5-year action plan based on focus group results to address senior needs now and in the future. Major themes identified from the focus groups were the need for more senior center space, transportation, and lack of affordable housing.

The next step in the Senior Action Planning Process will be to work with interested members of the community in developing a series of goals and action steps that can be used to address the identified needs. Staff is building partnerships between the City and the growing number of cultural/ethnic communities in Fremont to find the best and most culturally appropriate way to meet these needs.

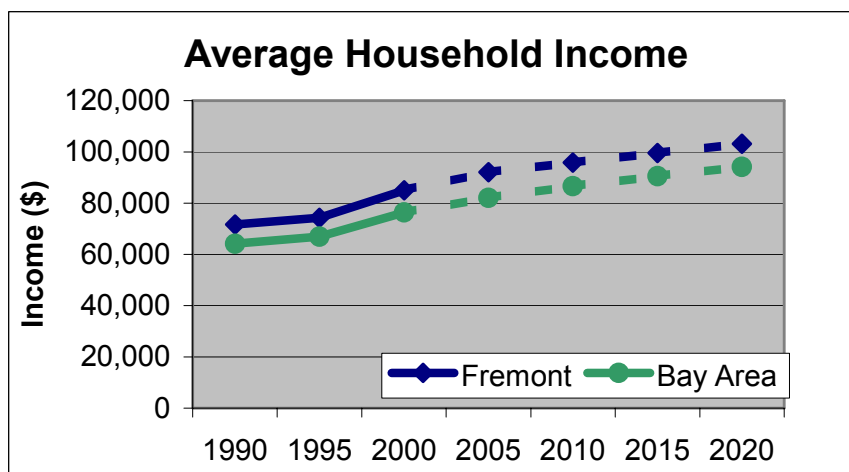
The aging of the population also has implications for the composition of the City's work force. As the Baby Boomer generation ages, there will be a relatively smaller pool of 25-55 year-old workers available for traditional full-time City employment. The City will need to take creative approaches to fulfilling its staffing needs. One option, given the growth of the retired population, will be to somehow tap into the talent and expertise of retired citizens.

It is important to note that the aging of the population may make it more important than ever to keep sight of the needs of youth in the community. Today's relatively low population of young people will be faced with the challenge of doing more with fewer workers as the population of retirees increases. In order to meet this challenge, tomorrow's community leaders will need to be exceptionally talented and creative. To prepare, the City and School District recently

conducted extensive surveys of youth and parents and are using the results to develop a Youth Action Plan. The next step in the planning process will be to develop goals and action steps that address the identified needs.

Household Income Rising

As the high-tech sector of Fremont's economy has blossomed, the average household income of Fremont residents has risen. According to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Fremont's average household income grew 19% in the past decade. It increased 14% between 1995 and 2000. As illustrated by the graph below, average household income in Fremont is about 10% higher in Fremont than in the Bay Area as a whole, and income is projected to increase at approximately the same rate over the next 20 years.



Source: ABAG: Projections 2000

Increased income levels may prompt higher expectations for City services, particularly in the areas of street and parks maintenance and development. They may also create a stronger market for upscale shopping and dining amenities, which would contribute to economic development and recreation goals.

Although income levels are rising on average, many Fremont residents—including those who work in the service industries and in lower-paid professions such as child care and teaching—will continue to face challenges in the expensive Silicon Valley market. Non-profit agencies will also face difficulties in finding affordable office space and qualified employees. The City will need to consider how to retain valued non-profit partners in Fremont or face the possibility of loss of services to Fremont clients of these agencies. The City will also need to look for ways to ensure that Fremont remains a place where less affluent citizens and families are able to afford adequate housing, health care, and childcare.

Strategic Issue: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Description

Civic engagement addresses the City's role in building connections among community groups and capacity for solving problems. It also addresses the challenge of integrating diverse community groups into the fabric of the community to ensure effective civic and government systems.

Why is the issue strategic?

A strong community is based on the extent to which people feel connected to others, share common interests, and are able to solve their own problems. A community's ability to build the sort of facilities that focus on arts and culture is traditionally grounded in strong local corporate philanthropy. An effective City government is based in large part on the extent to which members of the community have confidence in the government's ability to serve local needs and provide for the future. Growing future leaders and employees of the City and other local public agencies will be important to maintaining and nurturing the "Fremont way" of doing business. As Fremont ages and the community's diversity becomes more a fabric of our everyday life, community issues will become more complex. Active participation of all sectors of the community will be critical to effectively solve problems, and to creating future leaders in all walks of civic life, from elected officials to volunteer organizations. If we have a strong citizenry, with networking, skills in problem solving, and information sharing among groups and associations, we will have the foundation for trust and community well being.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for the future

The City Council has consistently supported avenues of community involvement and participation, at the individual, neighborhood and corporate level. Recently, the Council expressed support for a Community Building and Engagement Plan as one way of actively supporting the values of a strong civic life. Among the many opportunities created to engage the public in civic life, are Unity Day, multicultural senior focus groups, boards and commissions, Neighborhood Watch, CERT, Town Hall meetings, participation in the Chamber of Commerce's Leadership program, and the Central Fremont Community Team.

Key questions for City Council vision clarification

- What may be appropriate roles for the City in facilitating the involvement of our diverse population in community debate and decision-making?
- Is the City's current approach to community engagement, which strengthens the partnership with neighborhoods and helps groups to identify and address problems while becoming more self-sufficient, appropriate?

Background

Recent studies suggesting that the United States has experienced a decline in civic life during the latter half of the 20th century. For those communities that have remained strong, the data suggests they are strong because they are *civic*. This means that residents have well-established

relationships, know each other, and belong to formal and informal associations. These relationships help develop the bonds of trust that enable information to flow faster, and problems to be solved more quickly. Consequently, public involvement in the life of the community is deeper, and civic life is richer. Additionally, as people become connected with the future of the community, some of them look for ways they can serve in leadership roles.

An engaged, connected community will develop the trust that is essential to maintain the health of the community and the legitimacy of the government. Fremont has a large number of community associations, including a large number of cultural and ethnic associations that reflect Fremont's changing demographics. Fremont's associations are largely unconnected to each other, and interface with the city staff infrequently. The City has an opportunity to build trust and strengthen civic life by providing a way for groups and individuals to get to know each other, share information, network, and work on projects. In addition, the City sponsors a number of block level programs including Neighborhood Crime Watch and the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). These programs can be linked to other associations resulting in greater collaboration among diverse groups.

Civic education at the student level will be important to fostering a sense of connection between them, their families and neighborhoods, and the community in which they live. It can assist in sparking interest in serving on the City's boards and commissions, running for office, and serving as employees of the City. As we increasingly compete for the brightest and best talent with the private sector and other public agencies, we need to find ways to build our local youth's interest in serving their community through City government. Fewer and fewer people are going into government service and we need to "grow our own" in Fremont to keep the talent we have graduating from our high schools back in the community upon completion of their academic studies.

Corporate philanthropy has enabled many communities to create places for public gathering that otherwise would not be possible. In Fremont, we have seen generosity at Ohlone College from various corporate donors. In addition, many of our businesspeople have donated their time and talent to community issues over the years. As our community grows its local corporate base, we need to find ways to connect them to the well-being and future of Fremont.



Strategic Issue: REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ALLIANCES

Description

The City's role in regional collaboration and legislative advocacy will affect the city ability to achieve results for the community.

Why is the issue strategic?

The City needs to be able to influence actions of other agencies, ensure that the Fremont community receives its share of regional resources, and influence legislation so that Fremont continues to prosper. In addition, nothing important can be accomplished solely by an individual, or even by a single organization. Therefore, working effectively with other governmental and non-governmental agencies is imperative for the City to achieve great results for Fremont.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for the future

The City Council has expressed a desire to take a regional, state, and national leadership role on issues important to Fremont. Staff understands that transportation and energy policy are current focus areas. The City Council has also assumed leadership roles in the United States Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities.

Key questions for City Council vision clarification

- Does the City Council want to expand its regional, state, and national leadership?
- Can the City Council members expand the time they are engaging in regional, state, and federal arenas?

Background

Regional leadership allows the City to take a proactive role in influencing the City's destiny. Taking an active role in policy-making and resource allocation decisions by State, federal, and regional agencies can impact the City's ability to fulfill its vision. The City Council now adopts annual legislative priorities that help guide Council and staff advocacy efforts and enable the City to respond quickly and effectively to issues that arise in Sacramento and Washington.

There is also a realization that the City cannot achieve its vision alone. Working effectively and creating partnerships with other governmental and non-governmental agencies is critical to the City's ability to achieve great results for Fremont. For example, in FY 2000/01, the City worked with a variety of transportation agencies and other cities in support of the BART extension to San Jose. The City also has a long history of partnership with the Fremont Unified School District (FUSD). Recent partnerships include a swimming pool at American High School and additional tennis courts at Mission San Jose High School, the provision of school site counseling services at the junior high and elementary level, a drunk driving awareness education program for graduating seniors, and the creation of a comprehensive School District Diversion Master Plan to explore integrated waste management practices and alternatives and analyze projected cost savings. The City has also partnered with the Alameda County Library District to provide a facility for Fremont's main branch and enhanced hours and service at all branches.

Strategic Issue: RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL AMENITIES

Description

Investment in public recreation (parks, related facilities and programming) and commercial entertainment/recreation amenities provides an opportunity for regional distinction.

Why is the issue strategic?

Fremont's park facilities, with Central Park as a centerpiece, are a source of pride and distinction for the community. The strategic question concerns the degree to which the City desires to use recreation and entertainment amenities to distinguish itself regionally. A decision to pursue regionally distinctive commercial entertainment/recreation amenities (movie theaters, restaurants, local and touring theater, night clubs and other nightlife attractions) could enhance Fremont's reputation as a recreation destination. Additionally, investment in recreational amenities, particularly those that support cultural and performing arts, provides an opportunity to celebrate Fremont's culturally diverse community.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for future

Council desires to proceed with a philosophy consistent with today's practices, which may be summarized in the following way. The City Council envisions a robust system of parks and neighborhood community centers that will facilitate activities provided by the City or community groups. With regard to the commercial component of Fremont's entertainment offerings, the City Council has identified the attraction of upscale restaurants and entertainment attractions as goals for economic development. The current approach provides a solid "baseline" of services, without direction to pursue higher "levels" of public recreational services.

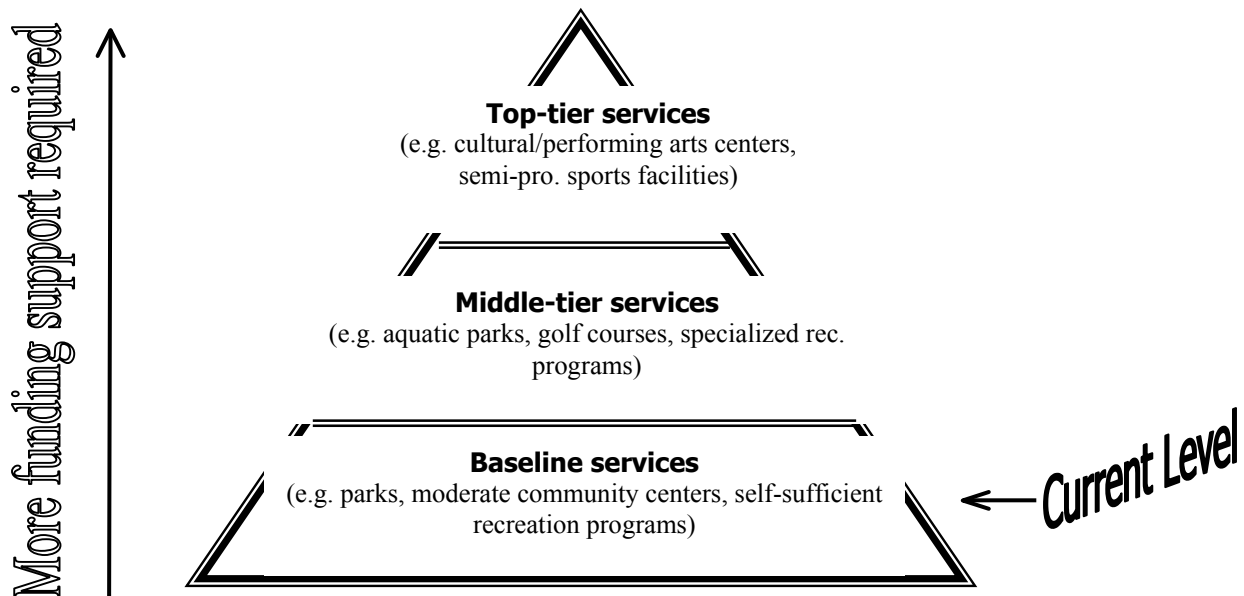
Key questions for City Council vision clarification

- Does City Council want to take recreation programming to a higher level by investing in significant new facilities (e.g. aquatic parks, cultural/performing arts center, cricket facilities, museums) toward a goal of having regionally renown facilities and programs?
- In addition to recruitment through economic development, does the City Council have suggestions for ways to partner with the private sector to expand entertainment amenities?
- Does the City Council support increased development of commercial entertainment? What are viewed as implications of that decision?



Background

The City's current investment in recreational amenities and alternative investment levels for the future are illustrated by the following graph:



Historically, the City's role in providing recreation amenities has been to provide highly-subsidized, high-quality park facilities, with limited subsidy for programming, which is required to pay for itself through user fees. This model has produced a relatively efficient operation meeting the most popular recreation needs of the traditional Fremont community. Operationally, the City Council has supported a more business-like model for delivering recreation services that provides popular programs (determined by paying participants) but limits the City's ability to deliver more unique programming that may require higher levels of direct subsidy. The existing model attempts to minimize the need for General Fund subsidy and maximize program registration fees as a source of income. The City is at a crossroads for the future in terms of our approach to funding recreational amenities; as the park development is tied to development fees. If the City Council's vision goes beyond the master plan, we will have to identify new avenues for funding park amenities.

As community demographics and lifestyles have evolved, particularly with regard to family structure and work demands, the City has felt pressure to offer more programming reflective of family needs, such as after-school programming and activities for healthy seniors. The City has also heard demands for additional capital-intensive facilities, such as swimming pools, golf courses, and a performing arts center to rival amenities in nearby communities. Additionally, the changing cultural face of Fremont has prompted new facility needs (e.g. cricket and lawn bowling) that were not originally accommodated in the Park Development Master Plan. Meeting these new demands may challenge the current business model, as major facilities such as those listed above are typically not financially self-sufficient, and require development and operational subsidies.

Another potential component for a community known for recreational amenities involves private-sector partnership. Plans for dining and shopping amenities are already included in the vision for the Central Business District and, to a lesser extent in the historic commercial areas. The City could pursue a higher level of private-sector amenities (e.g. movie theaters, restaurants, local and touring theater, night clubs and other nightlife attractions) to heighten Fremont's character as a destination even further. An aggressive strategy in this direction, however, would have to be accompanied by zoning changes and operational plans to mitigate potential side effects such as increased noise and public safety risks.

Strategic Issue: NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

Description

As the City's neighborhoods and housing stock begin to age and change over time, there is increasing pressure to preserve their quality, historic residential character and prevent deterioration.

Why is the issue strategic?

The City has been able to rely upon the fruits and benefits of growth to sustain its livability and quality of life. With aging neighborhoods, the City now needs to consider the most effective means for neighborhood preservation and whether it should be proactive or responsive as issues arise. Some proactive programs may be regulatory in nature, which may give rise for concern in a city which historically has relied upon the private sector to respond adequately to change. To the extent proactive means are chosen, there will be competition for scarce City resources to carry out neighborhood preservation programs, necessary capital improvements and maintenance of community facilities and parks.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for future

The City has historically uses a complaint-based approach to code-enforcement and neighborhood preservation to deal with issues that threaten the character of its neighborhoods. In addition, the City has invested in maintenance to beautify neighborhoods and traffic management strategies to mitigate the impacts of a growing and changing community.

The City Council recently adopted a comprehensive Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in which increased resources were allocated to capital infrastructure maintenance, including pavement maintenance and sidewalk repair, as well as city facility maintenance. City Council policy during the development of the CIP recognized the tension between allocating resources to new improvements and sustaining the City's existing facilities. In addition, the process required by new governmental accounting standards (GASB 34) to inventory and assess the City's assets, will engage the City Council and community in an active program to understand the health of the City's amenities and infrastructure for the future.

Key questions for City Council vision clarification

- Shall the City intensify its focus on neighborhood preservation?
- What role should the City play in such an intensification?

Background

There is an adage in local government that a community is made up of its neighborhoods and that the health of a city is measured by the health of its neighborhoods. With a couple of exceptions, the City of Fremont is just about finished with the initial neighborhood-building phase of its existence and in the future will need to respond to a built-out community that will age and change over time. Change will manifest itself in a variety of different ways leading to different kinds of pressure on City government. On the one hand, as things age, they tend to

deteriorate. While property values in Fremont have been rapidly increasing, thereby encouraging re-investment and maintenance, not everyone chooses to invest and property values may not always stay so high. This has become apparent in some of the City's single family neighborhoods as well as its multi-family housing. Where investment is not occurring, there is pressure on the City to enforce reasonable standards and to substitute public resources for what is normally private investment.

Fremont is fortunate to be located near the heart of the most dynamic economic engine of the last 50 years. However, if economic growth continues at its recent rate, Fremont could also experience ongoing pressure of another type: gentrification and neighborhood transformation due to high property values. This can lead to loss of neighborhood character, economic diversity, historic resources and relative residential affordability.

These kinds of pressures may lead to an increase in neighborhood preservation activity, city-sponsored neighborhood investment programs and neighborhood empowerment efforts. While code enforcement has been active in the City for many years, responding to aging neighborhoods and deteriorating neighborhoods may require a regulatory approach that the City has not heretofore aggressively sought to impose. Neighborhood preservation increasingly engages a complex set of issues, which requires collaboration among a variety of disciplines, both public and private. Typically, in a community as diverse as Fremont, there are varying views about how to preserve a neighborhood's character and the role of local government in doing so.

Finally, while most of the community facilities and other infrastructure in Fremont are relatively young, they too will age over time. The costs of maintaining facilities will increase over time; not just roads and capital infrastructure, but parks and community facilities that are also important measures of the quality of neighborhood life. Therefore, monitoring and maintaining such City amenities remains a growing need.



Strategic Issue: PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Description

The issue addresses the fundamental importance of preserving public safety for maintaining or improving a strong Fremont community.

Why is the issue strategic?

Public safety is fundamental for quality of life and for a healthy business community. Fremont enjoys a low crime-rate and continues to preserve the public's confidence in their safety. Fremont's reputation as a safe place to live, work, drive, and play contributes to the City's success in attracting and retaining high-quality businesses. The issue is strategic as maintaining a safe environment may be fundamental for capitalizing on any other opportunities. However, community expectations for services, and the related facilities required for safe and effective services, exceed the City ability to fund them.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for the future

The City Council intends to keep public safety as top priority and support it accordingly with appropriate resources. The City also supports a continued focus on crime and fire prevention, particularly as it may require partnerships among City departments, neighborhood groups, and other agencies in the community.

Key questions for City Council vision clarification

- Should the City pursue additional resources (such as bond issues) to meet public safety facility needs?
- Should the City increase its resource allocation and heighten its focus on disaster preparedness?
- Should the City consider adopting heightened measures to reduce the risk of fire and safety hazards in existing development?

Background

Safety provides a foundation for the quality of life in a community. For this reason, crime prevention and emergency response are among the City's most fundamental roles, and the City allocates more than half of its General Fund budget for police and fire services. Last year's 10% decrease in crime marked Fremont's lowest crime rate in 20 years. The City takes a proactive approach to crime prevention, working cross-departmentally and with neighborhoods to identify potential problems before they develop into law enforcement situations. The neighborhood policing strategy continues to mature, yielding a more integrated, multi-disciplined service effort at the neighborhood level.

Disaster response

A critical obligation of any local government is its response to citizens, community and businesses in the event of a disaster. The City has actively engaged in training our employees and the community in this effort for many years. Fremont's level of disaster preparedness is commensurate with neighboring agencies and jurisdictions. Nonetheless, the window of risk with respect to major earthquake activity in the Bay Area is widening and the impact could be significant; depending on the location of a major quake, perhaps even catastrophic. As a result of the increasing risk, disaster preparedness across departments is rising in priority and demanding greater allocation of resources to ensure the City can effectively manage a disaster response.

The nature of the Fire Department's business has changed dramatically in recent years, as fire prevention efforts and fire-safe construction practices have improved. In 2000, fewer than 1% of the calls were for working building fires. Approximately 60% of calls were for medical aid, and 25% of calls were for miscellaneous citizen aid. False alarms represented 10%, and about 1% were for hazardous materials problems. This shift in the nature of work has caused fire departments to recruit differently, hiring more paramedics to reflect the changing workload and community expectations.

Need for facilities

Evolving and growing communities like Fremont continually face facilities challenges. To ensure effective emergency response, police and fire service facilities must be located strategically through the community. They also must be sufficient in size to accommodate the right staffing levels for a growing community. Many of the City's fire stations are aging, and insufficient to meet current service demands. Four fire stations are in need of seismic retrofit, and several other stations are no longer sufficient for current equipment and staffing needs. Construction of a new jail and property warehouse will be completed by the winter of 2002.

Technology improvements

Technology promises innovation for improved public safety in the future. The City is implementing technological solutions wherever possible to improve public safety. The Police have received help with traffic safety enforcement recently with the installation of red-light signal enforcement technology. They are also exploring the applications of DNA technology for solving previously closed cases. The Fire Department is using technology to improve response time and safety with a pilot signal preemption program, and is readying the community for chemical accidents and terrorist attacks with improved equipment and training.

Workforces changes

Both Police and Fire services will be affected by the aging workforce, a reality made more urgent by recently adopted improvements to retirement benefits. The City is bracing for many retirements within the next couple years, and is recruiting and planning accordingly to mitigate potential service impacts.

Strategic Issue: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Description

The City's role in economic development strives to improve the community's economic base and quality of life for businesses and residents by working to attract and retain businesses, increase job opportunities, and strengthen tax revenues.

Why is the issue strategic?

Economic development is strategic because it is critical to sustaining a prosperous and healthy community. It provides a tax base that enables high quality public infrastructure, services, and amenities for residents as well as providing convenient local retail and business services. It is also strategic because well-paying jobs for community members represents a first step towards a higher quality of life.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for future

Since the early 1990s, strategic economic development has risen to become a top priority of the City Council. The City's overarching strategy is to invest in high-quality infrastructure and quality of life amenities that make Fremont an attractive place to live and do business. This strategy is reinforced through the City's efforts to foster relationships among businesses and with the City and to market the city to attract new businesses.

Key question for City Council vision clarification

- Should the City increase its emphasis on business attraction in any particular sector (employment centers, high-volume retail, or shopping and dining amenities) with increased marketing or increased subsidies and incentives?

Background

The City's role in economic development has generally been to invest in excellent infrastructure and support the development of a community with an exceptional quality of life. The City follows this investment with marketing and outreach efforts aimed at drawing attention to the quality of the community and the value it offers to prospective businesses. Direct incentives have been very limited.

In recent years, attention has been focused on the following areas:

- A. Building a stable, high-wage employment base, with particular desire for corporate headquarters, to build recognition and identity for the community.
- B. Improving fine dining opportunities in Fremont by concentrating resources on attracting new, high-end restaurants.
- C. Creating incentives to encourage location of high-volume retailers to Fremont to strengthen the sales tax base.

The City is completing an economic baseline assessment, entitled “The Fremont Economy: Present Realities and Future Possibilities” The report provides information upon which economic development strategies may be developed. The following information, except for the final section, “City’s role in economic development” is excerpted from the comprehensive report, to provide an overview of the local economy.

Composition and recent growth of Fremont’s Economy

Fremont posted very strong employment growth over the period 1992 to 2000, adding nearly 36,000 net jobs, a 61.4% expansion—significantly more than either Alameda County or the region. Health services and retail and consumer services are noteworthy for their stagnation compared to most other industry groups, although they are not far out of step with Alameda County or the region. Of the remaining industry groups, the only one that grew more slowly in Fremont than in Alameda County or the region was construction.

Several industry groups stand out for their high growth rates. Three of these—software, biotechnology, and new economy manufacturing—are information-based industries. They grew by 536%, 447%, and 133%, respectively. Despite rapid growth, software and biotechnology still represent only a small part of Fremont’s overall employment—only 7% combined. The mainstays of the city’s job base are still business services, new economy manufacturing, and wholesale trade, retail and consumer services, and traditional manufacturing. All increased or maintained their share of total employment except for retail and consumer services.

It is important to note that even many traditional industry groups are tightly bound up with the new economy. By some estimates, as much as one half of Fremont’s total employment is connected directly to high technology, even in such industry groups as warehousing and retail trade. The wholesaler dealing in computer parts, the retailer selling cellular phones, and the warehousing and distribution operation that handles the inputs used to manufacture printed circuit boards—not to mention legal, financial, and other advanced business services—are all part of the high-tech economy.

In terms of job growth, the star industry group in Fremont is clearly new economy manufacturing, which expanded by 133% from 1992 to 2000, accounting for 28.2 of Fremont’s total employment growth during this period and coming to represent 18.8% of the city’s total employment. Although some other industry groups grew more quickly, they account for a much smaller portion of the city’s total economy and overall growth.

Regional position

An examination of Fremont’s role within the regional economy is crucial to understanding the city’s strengths and weaknesses and to formulating future policy. Two useful measures of competitiveness are employment trends and venture capital investments. Together, these measures suggest that communications firms are more likely to see Fremont as a good place to expand rather than as a good place to get started, biotechnology and semiconductor firms view Fremont as a good location at all stages of their life cycle, and primarily small, young software firms choose Fremont as a location. These software firms either stay small or move out of Fremont when they reach a certain size. Thus, Fremont’s competitive position varies significantly from industry to industry.

Retail and City revenue growth

Fremont is not meeting its internal demand for retail services. In 1999 Fremont's per-capita retail spending was only 83% of the figure for Alameda County as a whole. Of comparable nearby cities in both Alameda County and Santa Clara County, Fremont had the lowest level of retail sales per capita. Moreover, Fremont stands in marked contrast to most other cities examined in that retail sales per capita declined between 1990 and 1999 despite steady population growth and a strong economy during the latter portion of the decade. This stagnation is also reflected in the slow growth in employment in the Retail and Consumer Services industry group, which expanded by only 15% from 1992 to 2000.

Fremont is slightly stronger in non-retail sales (i.e., wholesale and business-to-business). Non-retail sales are proportionately more important than in many of the other cities, accounting for roughly 40% of Fremont's total taxable sales, but in terms of per-capita sales Fremont lags well behind cities such as Milpitas, Pleasanton, and San Leandro.

Fremont's per-capita sales are higher than Alameda County's in only two categories, food stores and automotive. It is likely that in all other categories Fremont is leaking significant retail dollars to other communities. Apparel, general merchandise, and home furnishings and appliances are especially weak categories.

Given Milpitas' proximity to Fremont and its high level of per-capita sales, particularly in the categories in which Fremont is weakest, it is reasonable to assume that Milpitas is capturing significant spending from Fremont. Milpitas has been more successful at providing large-scale region-serving retail, including specialty retail such as stores catering to the region's large Asian population. Newark has captured a significant amount of retail, including several large stores that have left the Fremont Hub.

The result is that Fremont lags behind Alameda County and nearby cities in total taxable sales. This clearly has significant implications for the city's revenue base and should be taken into consideration when formulating policy.

Fremont's weakness in retail sales appears to have more to do with the performance of the city's retail establishments than with the amount of retail space. That is, the city has enough retail, but it is under-performing. The weak performance appears to be due to three main factors.

First, anecdotal evidence suggests that many shoppers looking for higher-end goods travel to Walnut Creek, Palo Alto, and San Francisco because they are not satisfied with the selection in Fremont. Although the Fremont Hub has made some efforts to upgrade its retail mix, it is unclear how successful this effort has been. Fremont is therefore losing out on opportunities to serve the affluent population within its own borders.

Second, Fremont's main retail center—the Fremont Hub—was conceived as freeway-oriented retail to serve the proposed Foothill Freeway (S.R. 238), which was never built. As a result, the CBD is home to freeway-oriented retail far from the freeway. Such retail neither performs as well as it might in a different location nor contributes to a vibrant pedestrian-oriented downtown environment.

Third, the city has not paid enough attention to ethnic market niches. Fremont's large Indian, Chinese, and other Asian communities often have specific market preferences that are left unmet in Fremont. Although McCarthy Ranch in Milpitas is meeting some of the demand for ethnic-specific retail, there are few high-end establishments catering to specific ethnic groups in the area. Experiences in other parts of the Bay Area—such as San Mateo County—show that there is a market for upscale restaurants that cater mainly to particular ethnic groups. Fremont's demographic diversity is a strength that can help position the city to provide specialty retail to serve populations beyond the city's borders.

The solution, therefore, is not simply to build more retail space, but rather to develop a strategy to provide unique retail offerings and fill a niche. Such a strategy does not rule out the possibility of strategic expansion of big box retail, such as the current projects involving Target, Costco, and Home Depot. However, it highlights the importance of physical planning as a key element of the city's economic development strategy. Fremont should create physical places for high-end and specialty retail to come into the city, including an attractive downtown. Equally importantly, the preferences of all Fremont's ethnic groups should be explicitly taken into account when thinking about the most desirable retail mix. This will help maximize the city's capture of retail spending by Fremont residents and residents of other cities alike.

City's role in economic development

Economic development encompasses a broad range of City activities. These activities contribute to retaining, growing, and attracting high quality companies for Fremont, enhancing the local tax base, sustaining economic growth, providing local retail and business services, and consequently, improving the quality of life for the community.

Since the City's incorporation, economic development has focused primarily on the following:

- Investment in the City's transportation infrastructure and mitigating the effects of traffic. Building freeway interchanges is a key example.
- Maintaining the City's physical infrastructure so that Fremont is a safe and attractive environment in which to work.
- Making it easy for new and existing companies to do business in Fremont. Fremont's recent involvement in energy issues is a good example as well as facilitation of communication with the business community through City newsletters, the Technology Forum, the Fremont Facilities Forum, and the Employment Expo.
- Marketing to current and prospective businesses. Examples include efforts to attract development interest, particularly retail to Fremont's downtown and to the historic districts.

Economic Development staff also work collaboratively with other City departments on City priorities such as extension of BART to San Jose, development of Pacific Commons, revitalization of historic districts and creation of a downtown Fremont.

Strategic Issue: HOUSING

Description

The preservation of the City's existing housing stock and encouraging the production of a diverse housing supply will likely require public intervention and resource allocation. Housing accessibility for a wide variety of the workforce has become increasingly difficult in a City where in-fill development may be the only means to produce units.

Why is the issue strategic?

To ensure that Fremont can continue to support socio-economic diversity in its population and supply the labor for a diverse economy, it is important that the City support a wide variety of housing types, pricing, and availability. Fremont needs to remain competitive in attracting new employers, particularly when business location decisions can be impacted by the effect of the long commute patterns of their employees. Retaining and attracting quality employees in the government, educational, and service sectors becomes especially difficult when employees are forced to either sacrifice quality of life (long commutes) or pay exorbitant housing prices. A diverse housing supply will sustain the quality of life enjoyed by the existing Fremont community by reducing traffic congestion and allowing multi-generations of families to be able to live and work in Fremont.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for the future

The City Council has an adopted housing strategy that included a variety of programs, ranging from the preservation of affordable housing to the provision of homeownership opportunities for first time homebuyers. In early July, the City Council authorized submittal of a draft Housing Element to the State for review. Major policy initiatives in the Element include an inclusionary housing program, rezoning of vacant and underutilized parcels to increase densities, possible redesignation of commercial and industrial sites as residential, and a continuation of many of the City's existing strategies. Existing strategies include the preservation of at-risk affordable housing, the first time homebuyer's program, the neighborhood improvement program and preserving and maintaining the City's rental housing stock.

Key questions for City Council vision clarification

- Can the City distinguish itself in the Bay Area as a community where a variety of housing types, pricing and availability is provided?
- Should the City develop new initiatives to ensure that the existing housing supply is preserved?
- The City Council recently adopted a new Housing Element to its General Plan that is being reviewed by the state. Should the City supplement the strategies included in that element in any way to take advantage of the planned investments in Fremont's downtown and in mass transit?

Background

Driven by the Silicon Valley economy and job growth, land values and housing prices have increased dramatically in recent years. The median cost of a single-family home in 2001 was estimated at \$478,000, which is an increase of 53% in two years. Assuming a 10% down payment and a 7% interest rate, an annual income of \$141,000 is required to purchase a median-priced single-family home in Fremont. For the same period, the cost of rental housing has increased 67% such that the average monthly rent for a 2-bedroom apartment is estimated at \$1,750. Using the standard figure of 33% of gross income dedicated to housing, an annual income of \$63,600 is required to rent a 2-bedroom apartment in Fremont.

Fremont has a long-standing history in the Bay Area of providing a diversity of housing types and prices. Until the last ten years, with some exceptions, the market in Fremont responded to the demand for diversity with a broad range of housing. During the last decade, while Fremont continued to promote its affordable housing programs to help retain a diverse housing stock, the overall imbalance of supply and demand has now priced many people out of the Fremont market. Especially vulnerable are service workers, government employees, teachers, the elderly on fixed incomes and many workers who provide the backbone of the manufacturing and construction business in Fremont.

Fremont's housing problem is part of the Bay Area's housing problem which is, at its root, a problem of supply and demand. When job growth was negative or slow in the early 1990's, housing prices initially went down, and then stabilized. In the overheated past few years of high Bay Area job growth, prices skyrocketed as housing supply fell behind job creation. While local governments can provide incentives and assistance, there are some encumbrances on increasing housing supply: primarily the lack of nearby unconstrained land. The subsidies available to preserve existing or create new affordable housing are extremely limited compared to the need. There is little agreement on solutions, with each potential solution have its own set of policy, economic or environmental costs.

Strategic Issue: TRANSPORTATION

Description

Transportation resources and allocations represent a substantial public investment by the citizens of the City and the Bay Area. The City's vision for such expenditures should be consistent and targeted over time to ensure that the competition for scarce resources results in benefits to Fremont.

Why is the issue strategic?

A well functioning transportation network is critical to ensuring that the City's quality of life and business and economic prosperity is sustained. The City's location in the greater Silicon Valley and as a desirable area to live, work and grow businesses requires that the impacts of significantly increased regional and through traffic in Fremont be mitigated as aggressively as possible. In order to do this, the City must position itself to be influential in the allocation of scarce dollars for transportation improvements both locally and regionally.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for the future

A regional transportation system which includes improved freeway links, the extension of BART to San Jose, improved ACE service and improved Dumbarton Express Service to facilitate commutes to and through Fremont. Facilitating the extension of BART to San Jose is the City's most important regional transportation initiative. Nonetheless, a well-managed and maintained, state of the art traffic signal system that minimizes travel times for intra-City trips is also a priority. The City Council also wants to eliminate bottlenecks on the City street system whenever financially feasible and to facilitate better signal coordination plans. Further, the City Council has identified the development of transit linkages among BART, commuter rail, buses, and local employers as critical to future private sector development in our industrial area.

Staff will continue to aggressively pursue resources in support of the following major regional projects: (1) completion of the Dixon Landing and Mission/Warren Interchanges and I-880 high-occupancy vehicle lanes, (2) BART to San Jose/Santa Clara, including the Washington and Paseo Padre grade separations, (3) Northbound I-680 high-occupancy vehicle lane and (4) new or improved I-680/I-880 connector(s).

Key questions for City Council vision clarification

- Historically, the City has built transportation systems to meet the transportation levels demanded by land use in the General Plan. Given emerging transit opportunities, namely should the City consider General Plan land use changes that will support new transportation opportunities?
- Are the implications of BART connecting to San Jose sufficiently important for the City to take an active role in advocating for and developing revenue sources for the completion of this project?

Background

In the Bay Area, transportation is inextricably linked with quality of life and economic vitality. Planning and construction of transportation infrastructure – roads, bridges, medians, – have long been a hallmark of Fremont’s high-quality development. However, rapid economic growth and the effects of the housing market on commute patterns have caused unprecedented traffic congestion on regional highways and local streets. Traffic congestion in the Bay Area, and particularly in Silicon Valley, is on the rise. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission estimates that average daily person trips in the Fremont-South Bay Corridor will increase 67% between 1990 and 2020, while the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority predicts that morning peak-hour person trips across the Alameda-Santa Clara County line will increase 52% increase. With the high cost of housing in the greater Silicon Valley and the predicted job growth in the region, the area will continue to draw many of its workers from northern and eastern Alameda County, Contra Costa County, and San Joaquin County. With few transit alternatives, the vast majority of these workers will continue to drive to work either in Fremont or Santa Clara County.

Mitigating the impact of an auto-oriented commute population is complicated by the extraordinary costs of improvements, challenges of inter-agency project management (federal, state, and local levels), and the resulting time required to develop and construct major improvements. To address transportation problems systematically, the City is pursuing regional, multi-modal solutions, while maintaining and improving local infrastructure.

The extension of BART through Fremont to San Jose is the City’s top transportation priority. BART will provide a convenient commute alternative for employees of Fremont businesses and may provide some highway congestion relief for other Silicon Valley commuters. Additionally, it may stimulate new economic activity in Fremont, as proximity to BART is attractive for multi-family residential and retail development. The City is working with partners on both sides of the Alameda-Santa Clara County line to facilitate this very important project. Associated with increased access to BART will be the need for links with other transit systems, such as AC Transit bus service and commuter rail. AC Transit service was recently improved by over 50% in Fremont and Newark with changed routings and schedules for residents and businesses.

Traffic growth in the Dumbarton Corridor, which includes Route 84 and Decoto Road between Mission Boulevard and the Dumbarton Bridge, is an emerging issue. Both Route 84 and Decoto Road are included in the Alameda County Congestion Management Program (CMP) and fall under their jurisdiction. A CMP deficiency (level of service F condition) has already occurred on one segment of Route 84, which will be remedied with the Measure B improvements on Mission Blvd. With decreasing levels of service on Decoto Road during the PM peak, a CMP deficiency may occur in the next few years, which will require a deficiency plan to be identified and ultimately implemented.

The City Council has also reinforced efforts to improve mobility within the community by implementing effective signal coordination whenever and where it reduces travel time for City residents. They have also requested an analysis of existing bottleneck locations throughout Fremont and projects to eliminate them where financially feasible.

While transit alternatives will emerge, improving and sustaining our local street network remains a priority for an effective transportation system. Excluding non-City funding sources, the recently adopted 2001-06 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) allocated \$123 million to build, improve and maintain the City's transportation networks over five years. While significant, there is still an unfunded need of \$ 38 million alone for street overlays over the same period.

Strategic Issue:

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION

Description

Renewal of the City's historic commercial districts is necessary to re-establish these areas as economic and vital assets around which the community can engage and be proud.

Why is the issue strategic?

With land uses and a vision established or under development for most of the City's historic districts, Fremont now has the opportunity to revitalize the sense of place which served these local districts well in the past. With focused resources, through a combination of redevelopment, community development, economic development, or capital improvements, the City can be an enabler or facilitator of such revitalization. Without an intervention at some level by the City, some of these districts will continue to languish and not compete successfully against economic development opportunities more easily accomplished elsewhere in the City.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for future

The City has undertaken both a Specific Plan and a Concept Plan for Centerville and is just completing a Concept Plan for the commercial portion of Niles. The City has launched an update of previous plans prepared for Irvington which will result in a new Concept Plan in 2002. The City has completed design guidelines for Mission San Jose. Adoption of these plans either clarified the City Council's intent in many of the historic districts or will soon do so. In some areas, such as Centerville and Irvington, some priorities have been set and are being pursued, while others, such as in Niles, are being clarified. The City Council, as well as the community, now wish to pursue an aggressive implementation of these plans and priorities and resources are being appropriated to do so.

Key questions for City Council vision clarification

- In order to achieve the vision, are we prepared to accommodate the tradeoffs that arise between economic revitalization, historic character and existing City standards (such as parking standards)?

Background

The City of Fremont began as a confederation of five small towns, but its earliest plans were for it to become a large city. Over the next 45 years, Fremont transformed itself into a city. It established a large industrial area and a Central Business District and developed a whole "new town" at its northwestern end. In the process of building itself, many Fremont residents felt that it was losing itself: its historic districts were doing poorly and its central business district developed as a series of isolated shopping centers and office buildings surrounded by parking. There was no heart to Fremont, and the historic hearts of the old towns were fading. The City's General Plan has consistently called for a vital and active city center as well as historic commercial "districts."

In 1998, the City merged its Redevelopment areas and obtained the additional resource of tax increment revenue needed to more effectively implement revitalization strategies for three of the historic districts. At the same time, the market place has returned to an appreciation of “main streets” with historic character. As the City moves forward with Redevelopment and other revitalization strategies, the residents and businesses in each of the historic districts are looking for ways to bring vitality to the districts. There is a continuing opportunity to create unique commercial centers because of some of the historic fabric that remains in each of the historic communities, with the exception of Warm Springs.

Fitting new development into older commercial areas is always challenging from a design standpoint. Assembling sites for economically viable development and developing them in a sensitive way is expensive. The needs of new development – and the desire of developers- to accommodate the automobile often conflict with historic community character. The role of mixed use development, including housing, in revitalization efforts, and the nature of the land use mix needed to revitalize some of the City’s historic districts is still a subject of analysis and discussion.



Strategic Issue: CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Description

The City is in a position where financial resources may be available to help provide some infrastructure to support a focused downtown, but a vision to guide the best use of such resources is necessary.

Why is the issue strategic?

Members of the community often travel outside of Fremont to experience the sense of place that a vibrant Central Business District with a well-defined downtown can provide. Further, the retail and office sector of the business community make choices about development in Fremont's CBD in a context and regulatory environment which lacks vision for the area. A Central Business District, with a focused "main street" containing a mix of land uses, would represent a fairly specific choice of an identity for the citizenry and the business community. A revitalized, focused downtown would also stimulate the local economy, increase sales tax and provide citizens an opportunity to shop in Fremont.

Staff's understanding of Council's intent for the future

The City Council has supported the goal of renewing the vision for the City's central business district and developing a focused downtown with a sense of place. Toward that end, the City Council is actively considering the draft CBD Concept Plan and policies, the appropriate regulatory environment for its implementation, and appropriating resources to launch the effort.

Key questions for City Council vision clarification

- Should City staff proactively pursue implementation of the CBD Concept Plan and the general urban design principles described in it as the framework for future development in the focus area?
- Is mixed-use housing an acceptable path for the CBD and if so, under what circumstances?
- What should be the role of new city hall and a potential cultural arts facility in the establishment of the focus area in the downtown?

Background

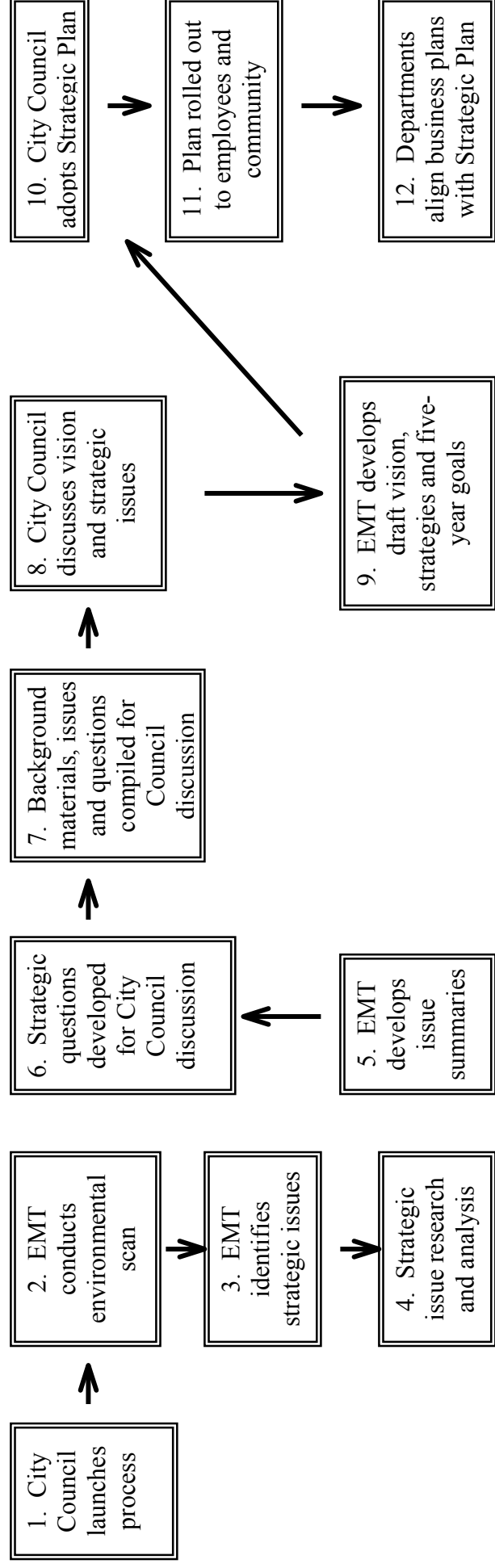
The City's General Plan calls for the establishment of "a vibrant, well-defined, visually distinctive central business district as the focus of the city's governmental, cultural, and commercial activity." In short, the City's long-standing vision is to have a "downtown," with a sense of place that is the heart of Fremont. The General Plan recognizes that Fremont needs a downtown to better establish its identity as a unified city, rather than a confederation of older small towns, and industrial area, and residential subdivisions. Today, Fremont's Central Business District (CBD) lacks the character of a downtown with a focus on pedestrian-oriented uses and a vitality of commerce and activity. It also lacks white tablecloth restaurants and high-end retail which often anchor thriving, main street downtowns. The proposed Central Business District Concept Plan could, if adopted by the City Council, establish a clear direction and a plan for achieving the vision as the important first steps toward the creation of a true downtown.

The Concept Plan divides the City's large Central Business District into seven distinct sub-areas, each with a different focus and recommendation for how it will develop over the 20-year timeframe of the plan. A variety of uses are permitted in each sub-area, however the plan emphasizes certain uses and characteristics for each one. The major sub-areas include the Fremont Hub, an Office Center, a Medical Area, the BART residential site and the "Focus Area." Key to the plan is the "Focus Area" bounded by Mowry, Walnut, Paseo Padre, and Fremont Boulevard. The focus area will be the hub of downtown activity, containing a mix of land uses. At the heart of the focus area is a proposed "main street" along Capitol Avenue: an attractive place to shop, stroll and dine anchored by a new City Hall. To achieve the vision, the next steps include establishing the regulatory and incentive framework consistent with the plan, and then working with private developers to ensure that the plan is implemented.

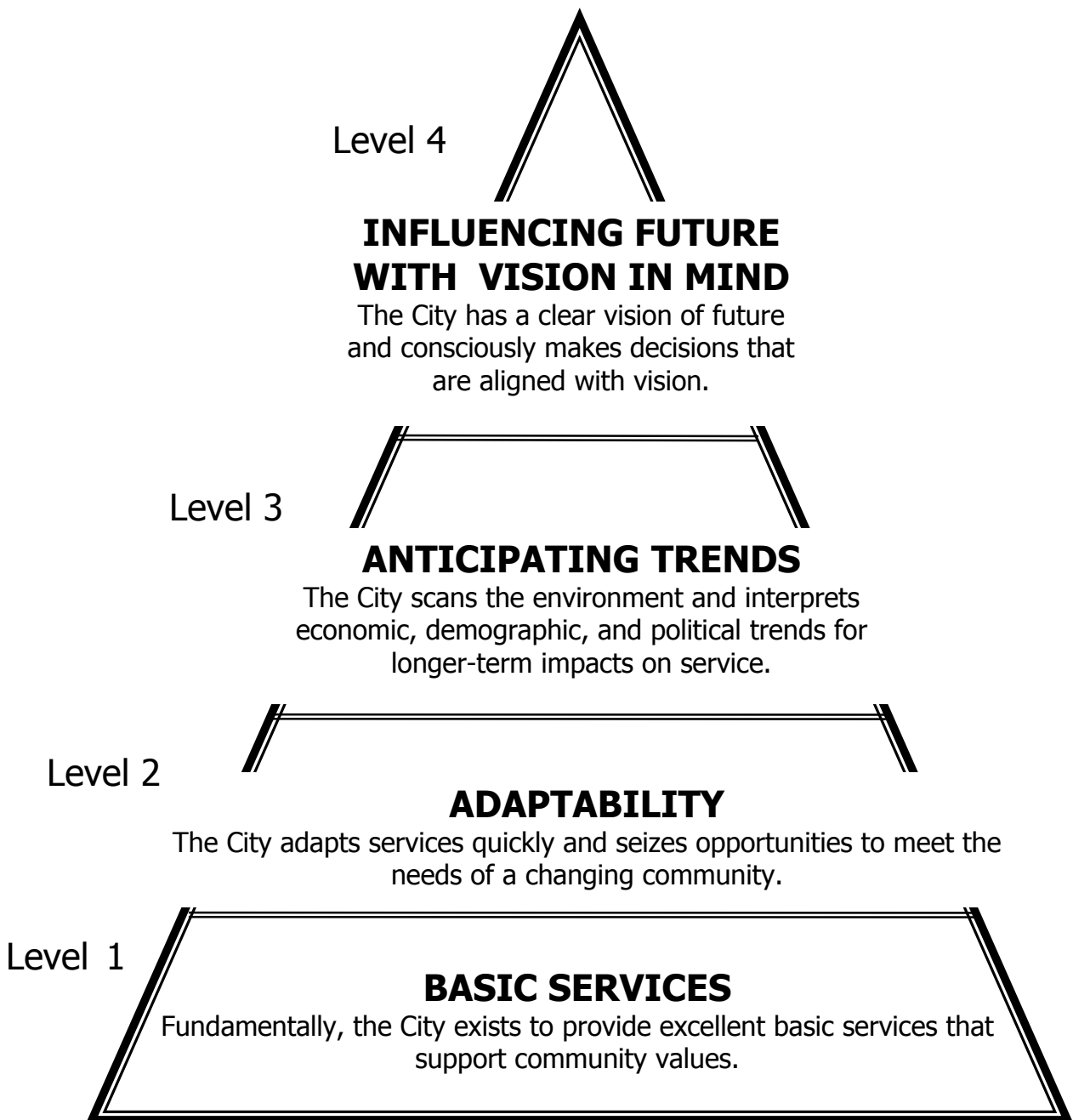


City of Fremont Strategic Planning Process

Project phase:	Process Launch	Environmental Scan	Issue Exploration	City Council Visioning	Strategies and Goals Development	Plan Adoption
When:	January 2001	January 2001	February -- August 2001	September 2001	October -- December 2001	February 2002
Products:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose and process for Strategic Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengths, weakness opportunities and threats Community values Consideration of alternative futures Inventory of current plans and planning initiatives Key strategic issues for future identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic issue statements Strategic questions for City Council feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council discussion of vision for future Council feedback on strategic issue questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft vision statement Draft strategies for City's role Draft 5-year goals for implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Plan adopted by City Council



Building Blocks of Effectiveness



All four levels are needed in order for the City to meet community expectations for excellent services and planning for the future.